

Happy New Year?

Subject: Happy New Year?

From: "L.A. City Controller Ron Galperin" <controller.galperin@lacity.org>

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[Los Angeles City Controller Ron Galperin](#)

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It's July 1st! Happy New Year...

Fiscal new year, that is. Here in the Controller's office, teams of financial analysts and accountants have been working hard to close the books on FY 2015-16 and get us ready to enter FY 2016-17. So whether you plan to spend the upcoming long weekend at the beach, camping with your family, or taking in [the local fireworks shows](#), I hope you'll also join me and everyone in our office in celebrating the start of our fiscal new year.

Sincerely,

 RON_sign

Would You Borrow Money and Leave it in the Bank?

 EchoParkLake400.jpg

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Of course not...When our office began an [audit of Prop Q](#) — the 2004 measure that financed stormwater cleanup — we never expected to discover that L.A. was making millions of dollars in

unnecessary interest payments on its bonds.

Yet once the audit was underway, we discovered the City regularly issued bonds for Prop O construction projects long before the bills came due. Even though the borrowed money was invested, those investments typically yielded rates of return 2.0% to 2.5% lower than the rates the City paid out to its bondholders.

Auditors determined that the City spent \$6.8 million on unnecessary interest payments over five years. To see if this was a fluke, we looked at three other bond programs and found the same pattern of premature issuance. Auditors estimated that City taxpayers may have paid as much as \$47 million in excess interest on these bond programs over an eleven-year period.

City policy currently requires departments to have cash on hand to pay for the full amount of a multi-year construction contract at the time the contract is signed. In the report, we recommended that the City change its procedures so it issues bonds closer to when the money is needed.

[VIEW Our Prop O story map and discover Prop O projects in your neighborhood](#)

[READ: LA TIMES \\$54 million wasted on 'unnecessary' interest payments, city controller says](#)

Check Out Our Checkbook

 [Checkbook400.jpg](#)

Who was the highest paid L.A. City employee in 2015? Did the City pay out more in liability claims in 2012 or 2015? Which City department paid out the most overtime in 2014?

The answers to these questions and many more are at your fingertips thanks to [Payroll Explorer](#) and [Checkbook LA](#), two new, mobile-optimized apps that our office recently released. You

shouldn't need an accounting degree to know where your money is going, and these intuitive apps make our City's financials more transparent for elected officials, department managers and the public alike.


Find something interesting in the data? Tweet it out with the hashtag #LAopendata.

VISIT: [Payroll Explorer](#) and [Checkbook LA](#)

READ: Downtown News [Soaring Salaries, Skyrocketing Overtime and More City Payroll Fun!](#)

WATCH: A [video tutorial](#) explaining how to use Checkbook LA

Audits In Action

 LAPD_Rampart_Comm  1024px-LAX_LA.jpg

Our audits and reports are being heard and policymakers are using our recommendations to change the way the City is run.

Getting More Officers on the Street

Our recent [audit of the use of civilian employees at the LAPD](#) ID'd 458 LAPD jobs -- involving tasks such as managing the police department's social media accounts, maintaining equipment rooms and tracking the flow of documents -- that are being performed by able-bodied police officers. Our audit recommended that those jobs be handed over to civilian employees, who, on average, earn \$44,000 per year less in wages and benefits than sworn officers.

The Mayor and City Council are already acting on our recommendations. The budget for FY 2016-17, which the Council

recently approved, includes [\\$1.462 million in increased funding](#) to hire an additional 125 civilians to perform positions being done by sworn personnel. This is a welcome development. Wisely spending our money on less expensive civilian employees to do administrative tasks frees up our force of professional police officers to keep our neighborhoods safe.

An Upgrade for Your Next Flight?

Los Angeles World Airports, the City-owned entity that operates LAX, is already making progress toward implementing the recommendations my office made in our Industrial, Economic and Administrative (IEA) Survey of LAWA.

I recently received a letter from LAWA CEO Deborah Flint, informing me that the airport authority is reorganizing in order to provide more oversight of major capital projects, using metrics to assess its economic impact on the local economy, engaging in a formal strategic planning process and--perhaps most importantly--putting more emphasis on travelers' experiences at LAX. I look forward to more news of progress, especially as LAX continues to upgrade its terminals and transportation systems.

Pride -- and Prejudice

June was LGBT Heritage Month--a month in which we celebrate the many contributions LGBT people make to our City every day. And unfortunately, a month in which prejudice against members of the LGBT community took a deadly toll in Orlando.

In the Council chambers, we honored men and women who are on the front lines fighting for the rights of transgender Americans. In the City Hall rotunda, we unveiled a curated exhibit from the [One Archives Foundation](#) of front pages from around the country announcing court rulings affirming the rights of gay men and women to marry.

But after June 12, celebrations became vigils. Talk about the freedom to marry was replaced by talk of gun control and terrorism.

Nevertheless, I leave June with an incredible sense of pride...in my city and in its community--gay and straight alike--tolerant, accepting, and full of love. The pictures below are from a month of highs and lows.

Happy New Year?

 July_1_LGBTCollage.jpg

Happy New Year?

A Thousand Words...

Happy New Year?

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Happy New Year?

L.A. City Controller Ron Galperin
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